

PRESS RELEASE



The Cleveland Museum of Art

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GERMAN EXPRESSIONIST GRAPHICS AT THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Over 75 expressionist graphics by 26 German artists, in the exhibition German Expressionist Graphics, are on view at The Cleveland Museum of Art through October 5. Included in the exhibition are etchings, aquatints, lithographs, woodcuts, and one linoleum cut, with the emphasis on woodcuts. German expressionist graphics are one of the strengths of the Museum's prints and drawings collection.

Among artists represented are Emil Nolde (1867-1956), George Grosz (1893-1959), Herman Max Pechstein (1881-1955), Paul Klee (1879-1940), Lyonel Feininger (1871-1956), Lovis Corinth (1853-1926), Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (1884-1976), Ernest Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1938), Franz Marc (1880-1916), and Max Beckmann (1884-1950).

Twentieth-century expressionism had its beginnings in the nineteenth-century neoprimitive movement which came out of the discovery of the primitive arts of South Sea Islanders and African tribes.

German expressionism, in the decade before World War I, was mainly associated with two groups: Die Brücke (The Bridge) and Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider). The Bridge was a loose association of painters in the city of Dresden who wished to form links with all artists working in an expressionistic manner, as well as a bridge to the future. They were especially influenced by Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Edvard Munch. The title of Wassily Kandinsky's painting The Blue Rider became the name of a group of southern German artists who were also pursuing expressionistic visions.

The expressionists attempted to do away with the concept of style because they felt it hindered the full expression of artists' "inner reality." Expressionism tended to reject classicism and realism and to rely upon the sub-conscious or

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unconscious responses of the artist to his or her environment. Artists viewed the forms of expressionism as vehicles for social change, art that would communicate the depth of its involvement and concern for mankind.

In the exhibition, Emil Nolde's Dancers (woodcut, 1917) shows the combined use of embossing and woodcut to blend graceful elements with primitive influences while George Grosz's, A Half-Century of Social Democracy (lithograph, 1922) shows one way expressionist artists made social comments through the use of exaggeration and characterization.

Other highlights of the exhibition include Herman Max Pechstein's Cows in the Meadow (lithograph), a vividly hand-colored expressionist landscape and Paul Klee's Calculating Old Man (lithograph, 1929).

Girl of Kowno, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff's woodcut (1918), demonstrates the influences of African sculpture, both in technique and image, on expressionist artists. Franz Marc's Tiger, a woodcut executed in 1912, shows the decorative quality of Marc's work and is typical of his interest in animals.

The exhibition, which is on view in the Museum's prints and drawings galleries, was organized by Anne Lockhart, assistant curator of prints and drawings at The Cleveland Museum of Art.

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For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Relations Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.